

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 /058 W
-----030328Z 097271 /72
R 021705Z MAY 77
FM AMEMBASSY MADRID
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 60

C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 3367

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, SP
SUBJECT: ALIANZA POPULAR LEADER ON SUAREZ CANDIDACY, ELECTORAL
TACTICS

1. SALVADOR SERRATS, SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE ALIANZA POPULAR COMPONENT UNION SOCIAL POPULAR (LED BY THE RIGHT MAVERICK, THOMAS DE CARRANZA), TOLD EMBOFF OVER LUNCH THAT THE INITIAL "TRAUMA" OF THE PCE LEGALIZATION HAS PASSED, BUT THE ISSUE WAS FAR FROM BURIED. EXPLAINING THAT THE PRESENTATION OF SUAREZ AS A CANDIDATE MEANT THAT THE RECORD OF THE SUAREZ ADMINISTRATION PERFORCE BECAME FAIR ELECTORAL GAME, SERRATS MADE CLEAR THAT THE AP INTENDS TO RENEW THE EFFORT IT MADE IN THE IMMEDIATE WAKE OF THE PCE LEGALIZATION TO MILK THE MAXIMUM ELECTORAL BENEFIT POSSIBLE FROM ITS CONSERVATIVE CONSTITUENCY.

2. SERRATS ALSO SPOKE OF THE DELICACY OF THE TASK PRESENTED TO SUAREZ' OPPONENTS BY HIS CANDIDACY, SINCE HIS POSITION AND HIS RECORD IN OFFICE WERE SO INTIMATELY LINKED TO THE KING, WHOM NOBODY WANTED TO ATTACK. SERRATS INDICATED THAT THE AP WAS FAR FROM DECIDED ON HOW TO RESOLVE THE DILEMMA, BUT HE LEFT NO DOUBT THAT PART OF THE AP CAMPAIGN STRATEGY WOULD INVOLVE ATTACKS ON ALLEGED ERRORS AND OMISSION OF THE SUAREZ ADMINISTRATION. (IN A RECENT SPEECH, AP LEADER
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AND RIGHT-WING IDEOLOGUE FERNANDEZ DE LA MORA INDICATED POSSIBLE TARGETS IN MENTIONING, IN ADDITION TO THE PCE LEGALIZATION, PURPORTED JURIDICAL DEFICIENCIES IN THE POLITICAL REFORM LAW AND THE COUNTRY'S ECONOMIC DETERIORATION.)

3. SERRATS BETRAYED CONFUSION ABOUT SUAREZ' PRECISE APPROACH TO HIS CANDIDACY AND HIS CONCERN THAT SUAREZ WOULD

BE A FORMIDABLE VOTE GETTER FOR ALL THOSE CREDIBLY ABLE
TO PRESENT THEMSELVES AS HIS ALLIES. SERRATS CLAIMED THAT
SECOND VICE PRESIDENT OSORIO HAS TOLD HIM A FEW DAYS AGO THAT
SUAREZ WOULD RUN IN MADRID AT THE HEAD OF HIS OWN TOTALLY
INDEPENDENT LIST WHICH WOULD INCLUDE CERTAIN CENTRO DEMOCRATICO
NOTABLES WITH THE CENTRO RUNNING ITS OWN SEPARATE QUOTE
SACRIFICIAL UNQUOTE LIST. (PERHAPS SERRATS CONFUSED THIS
SECOND LIST WITH THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS, BUT ALL THIS RUNS
COUNTER TO WHAT THE WELL PLACED SOCIAL DEMOCRAT FERNANDEZ
ORDONEZ TOLD US (MADRID 3166) TO THE EFFECT THAT SUAREZ
WOULD HEAD THE CENTRO LIST.) AND THE ISSUE OF THE CHRISTIAN
DEMOCRATS ASIDE, IT MAKES NO SENSE FOR THE LIMPING CENTRO
DEMOCRATICO TO DIVIDE ITS VOTES. AT ALL EVENTS, SERRATS
FELT SUAREZ' PRESENCE ON THE MADRID BALLOT WOULD LIMIT THE
ALIANZA POPULAR'S SHARE OF THE SEATS TO ABOUT 6 OUT OF 32. EATON

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